

THE ROLE OF EMPLOYEE VOICE ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND JOB SATISFACTION OF
AIRLINE EMPLOYEES IN JORDAN

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my beloved family;

To my grandfather, may Allah rest his soul in eternal peace

*To my great role models my father and my dear mother, and their continuous
encouragement to me, May Allah provide them strength and health*

To my beloved sisters for their support during this long journey

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ABSTRACT

In today's business environment, leaders of organizations cannot deal with the dynamic environment in silo, where opportunities and challenges are constantly changing. It is thus advisable for leaders to harness employees' input, ideas, and recommendations in fostering employee satisfaction, thereby promoting further development of an organization. The motivation behind this study is to seek a deeper understanding in determining the role of transformational leadership and employee voice as antecedents of job satisfaction. This study aimed at investigating the role of transformational leadership practices, comprising idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration and inspirational motivation in encouraging employee voice and improving job satisfaction. Another objective of this study was to investigate the role of employee voice as a mediator in the relationship between transformational leadership practices and job satisfaction. This study employed a proportionate stratified random sampling technique along with a cross-sectional design with data collected from 346 non-managerial employees at the Royal Jordanian Airlines in Jordan. Multivariate data normality tests, descriptive statistics, and structural equation modelling were used for data analyses. Additionally, discriminant validity, convergent validity, and composite reliability were estimated to ensure the validity and reliability of the study's construct. Findings of the study revealed a significant direct relationship between all transformational leadership practices and job satisfaction, except for idealized influence. Also, the study found a significant direct relationship between transformation leadership practices and employee voice except for inspirational motivation. The results indicated a significant mediating effect of employee voice in the relationship between idealized influences, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration and job satisfaction. However, employee voice failed to function as a mediator in the relationship between inspirational motivation and job satisfaction. The current study has contributed to literature by introducing new empirical evidence in organizational studies of the antecedents of job satisfaction. Findings of the study suggest that it is advisable for organizations to invest in transformational leadership training and create a platform that encourages employees to express their opinions and ideas regarding job-related matters as this could improve employee job satisfaction levels.

ABSTRAK

Dalam persekitaran perniagaan hari ini, pemimpin organisasi tidak boleh menghadapi dengan persekitaran dinamik dalam silo, yang mana peluang dan cabaran sentiasa berubah. Oleh itu, dinasihatkan agar pemimpin memanfaatkan input pekerja, dan cadangan dalam memupuk kepuasan pekerja, sehingga mempromosikan perkembangan lanjut sesebuah organisasi. Motivasi di sebalik kajian ini adalah untuk mencari pemahaman yang lebih mendalam dalam menentukan peranan kepemimpinan transformasi dan suara pekerja sebagai pendahulu kepuasan kerja. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk menyiasat peranan amalan kepemimpinan transformasi, yang terdiri daripada pengaruh ideal, rangsangan intelektual, pertimbangan individu dan motivasi inspirasi dalam menggalakkan suara pekerja dan meningkatkan kepuasan kerja. Objektif lain kajian ini adalah untuk menyiasat peranan suara pekerja sebagai pengantara dalam hubungan antara amalan kepemimpinan transformasi dan kepuasan kerja. Kajian ini menggunakan teknik persampelan rawak berstrata berkadar bersamaan dengan reka bentuk rentas dengan data yang dikumpulkan daripada 346 pekerja bukan pengurusan dalam Penerbangan Royal Jordanian di Jordan. Ujian kebiasaan data multivarian, statistik deskriptif, dan pemodelan persamaan struktur digunakan untuk analisis data. Di samping itu, kesahan diskriminasi, kesahan konvergen, dan kebolehpercayaan komposit telah dianggarkan untuk memastikan kesahan dan kebolehpercayaan pembinaan kajian. Penemuan kajian mendedahkan hubungan langsung yang signifikan antara semua amalan kepemimpinan transformasi dan kepuasan kerja, kecuali pengaruh yang ideal. Selain itu, kajian ini juga mendapati hubungan langsung yang signifikan antara amalan kepemimpinan transformasi dan suara pekerja kecuali motivasi inspirasi. Hasilnya menunjukkan kesan pengantaraan suara pekerja yang signifikan dalam hubungan antara pengaruh ideal, rangsangan intelektual, pertimbangan individu dan kepuasan kerja. Walau bagaimanapun, suara pekerja gagal berfungsi sebagai pengantara dalam hubungan antara motivasi inspirasi dan kepuasan kerja. Kajian semasa telah menyumbang kepada kesusasteraan dengan memperkenalkan bukti empirikal baru dalam kajian organisasi tentang pendahuluan kepuasan kerja. Penemuan kajian mencadangkan agar organisasi melabur dalam latihan kepemimpinan transformasi dan mewujudkan platform yang menggalakkan pekerja untuk menyatakan pendapat dan idea mereka mengenai perkara yang berkaitan dengan pekerjaan kerana ini dapat meningkatkan tahap kepuasan kerja pekerja tersebut.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

MLQ	-	Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire
JSS	-	Job Satisfaction Survey
TL	-	Transformational Leadership
EV	-	Employee Voice
JS	-	Job Satisfaction
II	-	Idealized Influence
IS	-	Intellectual Stimulation
IC	-	Individualized Consideration
IM	-	Inspirational Motivation
SPSS	-	Statistical Package for Social Science
Amos	-	Analysis of Moment Structure
SEM	-	Structural Equation Modelling
CFA	-	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
CR	-	Composite Reliability
GFI	-	Goodness of Fit
AGFI	-	Adjusted Goodness of Fit -
NFI	-	Normed Fit Index
TLI	-	Tucker Lewis Index
RMSEA	-	Root Mean Square Error of Approximation
CFI	-	Comparative Fit Index
AVE	-	Average Variance Extracted
SET	-	Social Exchange Theory
SDT	-	Self-Determination Theory

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

Nowadays, employees are in quest of an organization where they feel acknowledged and satisfied for their contribution to a supportive working environment (Molla, 2014). Besides, contemporary organizations are not merely to provide satisfaction to their clients, but also to create a workplace that is appealing and satisfying for their employees. Job satisfaction is one of the most challenging aspects that managers are facing due to its influence on both employees and organizations (Emmanuel & Hassan, 2015). However, it is considered a significant element in all types of organizations for the reason that it is expected to achieve a better customer service, workforce retention rates and better service quality (Hussein *et al.*, 2013). In fact, it is essential for the success and survival of organizations (Sinha & Shukla, 2012).

A job is an essential part of any individuals' life, and it does occupy a lot of professional and personal time in comparison to any other activities. Satisfaction is feeling the pleasure once needs are fulfilled (Ali, 2016). Job satisfaction is "*a positive emotional state resulting from employees' appraisal of their jobs*" (Taylor, 2007, p 939). In other words, employees' job satisfaction depends on their evaluation of the workplace positive and contented environment (Spector, 1997). Therefore, the first step regarding reaching job satisfaction is to identify and implement the aspects that

satisfy employees and eliminate aspects that do not, cause in desirable employees behaviours (Molla, 2014).

Scholars from different fields such as organizational behaviour and human resource management dedicate substantial effort to investigating the antecedents of job satisfaction. Job satisfaction has been made known to have a number of antecedents, and for example, Locke (1976) revealed that pay, promotion, working conditions, employment benefits, and individual values are considered as antecedents of job satisfaction. Purcell *et al.* (2003) asserted that discretionary behaviour that helps an organization to prosper and more successful is most expected to take place once employees are motivated and have a commitment to the organisation where the work provides them with a high level of satisfaction. Herzberg (1966) identified that the antecedents of job satisfaction are intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors such as social relations with the work group, the quality of supervision, and the degree to which employees fail or succeed in their job. Accordingly, this study intends to examine the role of transformational leadership and employee voice as antecedents of job satisfaction which is one of the elements that plays a significant role in employees' performance and productivity. Furthermore, this study seeks to assess the role of employee voice as a mediator in the relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction at Royal Jordanian Airlines.

1.2 Background of the Study

The airline industry in Jordan has a significant footprint in the Jordanian economy, supporting a 980 million dollars gross value added contribution to gross domestic product (GDP) in Jordan in 2014. Spending by foreign tourists supported a further \$1.4 billion gross value added contribution to the country's GDP. Hence, the airline sector and foreign tourists arriving by air supported 6.6 % of the country's GDP (Oxford Economics, 2016). Also, airlines, airport operators, airport on-site enterprises and aircraft manufacturers, employed 14,000 people in Jordan in 2014. Moreover, by buying goods and services from local suppliers, the sector supported another 16,000 jobs. On top of that, the sector is estimated to have supported a further 8,300 jobs by

paying wages to its employees, some or all of which are subsequently spent on consumer goods and services. Foreign tourists are arriving by air in Jordan, who spend their money in the local economy, are estimated to have supported an additional 54,000 jobs in 2014 (Oxford Economics, 2016).

In the modern competitive environment, one of the most significant elements that create sustainable competitive advantage and value for service organizations is the workforce; they are the heart of any service provider organization (Training, 2012). However, the success or failure of the airline industry as service provider heavily contingent on employees' attitudes, behaviours and performance. Employees have as much impact on organization's image as operation system, planning and investment (Isaed, 2016). According to Chen and Kao (2012), the airline industry has two major issues, one of them is safety, and the other one is customer satisfaction and both factors strongly affected by employee's satisfaction and performance.

Every organization desire is to retain the best human resources to accomplish its aims, but this can only be possible when it has a satisfied workforce since a satisfied workforce work hard and generate extra efforts to attain organizational objectives (Sinha & Shukla, 2012). An employee's job satisfaction rely on intrinsic and extrinsic factors, and overall job satisfaction is a combination of both categories of factors (Kiarie *et al.*, 2017). Many factors may enhance job satisfaction of employees like supervision, advancement, working conditions, organization policy and administration, compensation, interpersonal relationships, empowerment and recognition. However, the quality of leader-employee relationship has a strong link to job satisfaction, and employees feel contented and satisfied with leaders who are more supportive (De Cremer *et al.*, 2007). Leaders' starring role in improving employees' job satisfaction is to ensure the working environment is positive, morale is high, and they have the resources they need to accomplish the tasks they have been assigned.

Scholars and academics described leadership as the act of leading others that promotes and stimulates a mutual engagement of employees (Antelo *et al.*, 2010; Northouse, 2010). Leadership is an essential element in the process of influencing employee's behaviour since nearly every individual is either influenced by a leader or else influencing others by being a leader. An effective leader is expected to play many

roles in the organization and is characterized as confident, trustworthy, accountable and efficient. Moreover, it is one of the elements that affect employees' satisfaction, and employees' behaviours (Belias & Koustelios, 2014). Organizations can simply maintain relevance and accomplish a long-standing success and sustainability through embracing a leadership model which addresses the necessities and needs of their changing environment (Shadraonis, 2013). Hence, the accomplishment of the organizational goals depends on leaders and their style of leadership.

Over the last 30 years, transformational leadership has become one of the most prominent theories of organizational behaviour (Wright *et al.*, 2012). It was defined as a practice where "*leaders and their followers raise one another to higher levels of morality and motivation*" (Burns 1978, p.20). The essence of this style is the capability of leaders to motivate and influence followers to accomplish a holistic change of vision and goals. Transformational leadership is more dynamic and more constructive than other leadership styles in regards of motivating and encouraging the followers to achieve greater performance (Bass & Avolio 1994). Leaders serve as role models and motivate their followers to perform beyond their abilities and take into consideration their needs and requirements. The attention and consideration leaders provide to their followers are often reflected in employees' attitude toward their job, and result in improving job satisfaction (Munir *et al.*, 2012). In different words, when leaders practice transformational leadership within organizations, it is proved that they will have more satisfied followers than leaders who do not practice transformational leadership (Ali *et al.*, 2013).

Transformational leaders encourage and promote effective communication with all levels of an organization (Triller, 2011). Effective communication avoids obstacles among individuals within organizations that might hinder growth in achieving mutual goals. As soon as leaders are open, listen to followers and eager to discuss different ways of accomplishing the organization aims and give attention to new opportunities, employees are more expected to sense that it is safe to bring up new ideas without fear of negative consequences (Erkutlu & Chafra, 2015). Such a scenario is considered vital regarding individuals' feedback and recognition, as well as ensuring each employee recognizes that his/her voice is valued within the organization. Also, it demonstrates the acknowledgement of employee efforts to assist the organization

(Proctor, 2014). Due to these characteristics, employees are more likely to contribute and feel satisfied at the organization through voicing their positive opinions and recommendations (Men, 2014).

Interest in the investigation of employee voice has increased exponentially in recent years, and scholars across diverse disciplines have identified significant factor related to employees engaging in employee voice and its outcomes for organizations (Mowbray *et al.*, 2015). Maynes and Podsakoff (2014, p.88) defined employee voice as *“an individual’s voluntary and open communication directed toward individuals within the organization that is focused on influencing the context of the work environment.”* The expression of voice is mainly caused by an employee desire to show frustration and dissatisfaction along with suggestions and opinions concerning the developments and improvements of the organization (Liang *et al.*, 2012; Van Dyne *et al.*, 2003). Voice helps both organizations and employees, and it is a “win-win solution” where the requirements of employees are fulfilled, which helps organizations accomplishes their goals (Strauss, 2006). Furthermore, organizations prosper on their employee's ideas and suggestions, and employees speak up with the purpose of being perceived as active contributors besides advancing their jobs (Llopis, 2012).

Employee voice relates to employees' capability to impact the outcome of organizational decisions by taking the chance to improve their ideas and have them considered. MacLeod and Clarke (2009, p.75) stated that an empowered and efficient employee voice occurred once: *“Employees’ views are sought out; they are listened to and see that their opinions count and make a difference. They speak out and challenge when appropriate. A strong sense of listening and responsiveness permeates the organization, enabling effective communication”*. It is clear that employee’s decision to speak up relies on their evaluations of the consequences of their actions, whether it will be positive or negative. For that reason, many employees do not speak out due to their concern that the disadvantages of doing so might outweigh the advantages (Detert & Edmondson, 2011).

Burris *et al.* (2013) indicated that employee voice is expected to lead to promising outcomes. According to Sinha and Shukla (2012), the higher the existence of upward communication from employees to the management level, the higher the

job satisfaction levels will be. It means when employees feel that they can speak up and deliver their ideas, and recommendations to management, they are more expected to feel satisfied than employees who cannot express their thoughts and opinions. Also, Genc (2010) argued upward communications provide employees with a sense of being taken into consideration by management and since it creates an atmosphere of active participation in the organization, which consequently results in job satisfaction. Moreover, a report by CIPD (2012) concluded that employees who have the opportunity to express their views and opinions report more positive emotions, self-confidence and feeling satisfied than the ones who cannot.

1.3 Problem Statement

The motivation behind this study is that Royal Jordanian Airlines as one of the biggest and oldest organizations in Jordan have been going through substantial changes and fluctuations in the last few years. According to the airline's annual report within the previous five years, the organization has been struggling due to a loss of millions of dollars and changes to leadership (Royal Jordanian Airlines, 2015). Hence, this study proposes that job satisfaction can be one of the elements that transform change within the internal environment and improves the employee's service quality (Piriyathanalai & Muenjohn, 2012) and organizational performance (Mafini, & Poee, 2013, Spring, 2011).

Employees' job satisfaction is one of the most important elements in the workplace. (Dobre, 2013). Satisfaction is a basis for them to stay in their existing organization or leave it for another (Lu *et al.*, 2016). In the modern competitive environment, one of the most significant elements that creates sustainable competitive advantage and value for organizations is the workforce; they are the heart of any organization (Training, 2012). Moreover, the success or failure of organizations heavily contingent on employees' attitudes such as job satisfaction. Employees have as much impact on organization's image as operation system, planning and investment (Isaed, 2016). More specifically, non-managerial employees' as a human asset has an impact on organizations and are expected to drive organizational performance and

productivity (Andries, & Czarnitzki, 2014). Accordingly, workforce satisfaction is a significant element for the reason that it is expected to achieve a better productivity ratios, workforce retention rates and better service quality (Hussein *et al.*, 2013). In this study, non-managerial employees at Royal Jordanian airlines represents almost 95 percent of the organization and their job satisfaction levels have a huge impact on the service quality and performance of the organization (Royal Jordanian Airline, 2015)

It is also anticipated that organizations depend significantly on its leadership (Northouse, 2010). However, creating and maintaining a better relationship between leaders and employees' remains one of the crucial leadership challenges in today business environments (Han *et al.*, 2016). The growing body of knowledge on leadership literature recognizes the necessity to establish such association to avoid poor performance, unmotivated employees and dissatisfaction (Berkovich, 2016; Katou, 2015). In fact, most leaders do not provide adequate consideration to problems and issues associated with their employees' job satisfaction and obligation towards their organization (Lo *et al.*, 2009). In the majority of the cases, employees leave their leaders not their jobs, when they switch from an organization to another (Kiarie *et al.*, 2017). Usually, as soon as employees have a position in any organization, they expect to get along with their leaders and seek to cultivate a constructive working relationship (Elpers & Westhuis, 2008). However, problems grow once an employee starts to experience challenging interactions with the leader, which generate a feeling of being unworthy to perform the job satisfactorily over time (Harvey *et al.*, 2007). Therefore, it is established that when leaders do not have the capabilities and the experience in managing change and leading their employees, the level of employee's satisfaction decreases (Elshout *et al.*, 2013).

In the same manner, leaders tend to ignore their employees' expression of ideas and opinions, especially when it comes from lower level employees. They rarely listen to employees' views and suggestions which are different from their own without creating fear in those whose opinions differ from theirs (Cangemi & Miller, 2007). Moreover, leaders tend not to support environments in which originality and creativity flourish. Despite the benefits of employee voice behaviour and the reason to be encouraged, it appears it is not the situation in lots of organizations in the private or public sectors (Dwomoh, 2012). It has been distinguished that productivity levels in

many organizations have extensively decreased since employees do not have the rights to voice their opinions on matters related to their organization (Dwomoh, 2012). Throughout previous years, employee voice has been ignored, which limits the prospects of creating engagement through employee's behaviours and attitudes (Purcell, 2014). Apparently, the main reason of this because managers are usually isolated and do not know how to relate to their employees on a personal or professional level. Moreover, employee voice can be challenging, where it is hard for managers to justify their decisions and share their ideas and plans with employees (MacLeod & Clarke, 2009). However, the essence of employee voice lies in influence being shared among individuals who are hierarchically unequal (Farndale *et al.*, 2011).

Change is a difficult process for any organization and cannot be done without clear strategies, which are often the responsibility of the leaders of that particular organization (Randall, 2012). Due to the complexity of change, relying on traditional leadership styles and models is argued not to be the best approach to endorsing continuous change transformation. Transformational leadership has received considerable research attention transmitting employees to use a variety of skills, vision, decision-making, problem-solving, and creative thinking to meet the organizational goals (Berkovich 2016; Katou 2015).

Jordan as a small developing country that strives to create a modern, livable state with substantial potential for growth and prosperity. The country possesses highly educated and a skilled young population, which is its most valuable resource in any organization. According to Bass and Riggio (2006), transformational leadership has been linked positively to the process of follower development, employee motivation, and its impact on employees' behaviours and attitudes in the workplace. Moreover, organizations are advised to have faith in transformational leadership practices more than any other leadership style owing to the significant role transformational leadership offers in follower's motivation, inspiration and satisfaction (Bass, 2006). Regarding job satisfaction, it has been established that leaders who practice transformational leadership style through role modelling motivation and followers stimulation are expected to have satisfied followers more than other leaders who do not practice transformational leadership (Ali *et al.*, 2013). In consideration of the above discussion, it is coherent to choose transformational leadership as a key

indicator of job satisfaction since the presence of transformational leadership practices create an environment that provides the opportunities for follower's development and be a part of improving organizational effectiveness, which in turn, make them feel satisfied.

Despite the fact that the relationship between transformational leadership practices and job satisfaction was mentioned through researchers, only a few investigated it empirically. Voon *et al.* (2011) stated in their study on public organizations in Malaysia that transformational leadership motivational role help improves employee's levels of job satisfaction. Moreover, Ali *et al.* (2013) revealed that transformational leadership qualities of leaders, improved job satisfaction levels at public universities. More specifically, in Jordan, Awamleh and Al-Dmour (2010) found that transformational leadership boosts employee job satisfaction levels at bank sector. Another study from Mohammad *et al.* (2011) indicated that transformational leadership enhances job satisfaction among nurses in Jordanian private hospitals. Recently, Abdelhafiz *et al.* (2016) in a comparison study between public and private hospitals in Jordan found a positive relationship between that transformational leadership and satisfaction. However, a further investigation and elaboration on the relationship between transformational leadership practices (idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, inspirational motivation) and job satisfaction are required in the airline industry in Jordan to help ensure a competitive advantage for airline organizations. Therefore, this study raises a question on the relationship between transformational leadership practices and job satisfaction at one of the main airline organizations Royal Jordanian Airlines.

Although several academics and scholars have declared that management and leadership behaviours and styles have a significant influence on employee voice, merely a small number have attempted to examine this issue empirically (Zafar, 2016). Hu *et al.* (2015) and Liu *et al.* (2010) studies revealed the transformational leadership has a significant positive role in encouraging employee voice. An empirical study of Detert and Burris (2007) has proposed that the transformational leadership approach has a positive impact and influence on employee's voice behaviour. Moreover, Walumbwa and Schaubroeck (2009) investigated the relationship between ethical leadership and employee voice and found that ethical leadership is positively related

to employee voice. Even though these studies provided a valuable proof for the role of leadership, however, further investigation on the relationship between each of transformational leadership practices (idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, and inspirational motivation) and employee voice is required in a different context to validate this relationship. Moreover, research on voice behaviour in organizations has been mostly addressed in the context of developed countries, hence reflecting empirical data regarding such context (Umar & Hassan, 2013; Brinsfield, 2009; Detert & Burris, 2007). Therefore, this study raises a question on the relationship between transformational leadership practices and employee voice at one of the main airline organizations in Jordan, Royal Jordanian Airlines.

The relationship between employee voice and job satisfaction has not been investigated thoroughly within the literature and has been ignored (Holland *et al.*, 2011; Wright, 2006). However, Holland *et al.*, (2011) indicated in their study in Australia that direct employee voice has a significant positive effect on job satisfaction levels. To ignore such a plausible relationship between these two constructs is unexpected for two main reasons. First, employee voice is an essential matter for human resource experts. It involves creating the opportunity for employees to express their ideas and suggestion regarding work-related matters and improve the quality of relations between leaders and followers and motivates employees to be more enthusiastic and dedicated towards their job (Wilkinson & Fay 2011). Second, job satisfaction is distinguished as an important variable related to organizational dynamics, such as performance (Mafini, & Poee, 2013, Spring, 2011).

Also, there is a lack of evidence that studies have integrated self-determination theory in explaining the relationship between employee voice and job satisfaction. Self-determination theory (SDT) is concerned with people's inherent growth tendencies and innate psychological needs. SDT focuses on the degree to which an individual's behaviour is self-motivated and self-determined (Ryan, & Deci, 2017; Deci, 1971). According to SDT, humans are inherently directed towards activities that satisfy psychological needs (Deci & Ryan, 2000). It also points to that motivation influence our goal-oriented behaviour and determines individual satisfaction (Deci & Ryan, 2000, 1985). This study perceives employee voice as goal-oriented behaviour where expressing voice provides satisfaction of the basic psychological need such as

autonomy, which is about having the choice to express ideas and opinions about work-related issues. Therefore, it is important to address this gap in a better understanding of the nature of the relationship between employee voice and job satisfaction which is investigated at Royal Jordanian Airlines.

Regardless of the numerous studies conducted on transformational leadership and its relationship to different outcomes, yet the influence process of transformational leadership remains inadequately understood (Tafvelin, 2013; Avolio *et al.*, 2009). It is important to realize the way in which transformational leaders do influence their employee's behaviour and attitudes, and the reason transformational leadership generate a positive impact on followers. Therefore, the understanding of the effect process, regarding determining how transformational leadership practices influence several mediating and outcomes constructs, can reinforce and support the theory of transformational leadership (Van Knippenberg & Sitkin, 2013; Yukl, 1999). However, there is a lack of research in this area to explain why and how and transformational leadership impacts employee's behaviours, motivation and attitudes. As a result, this has driven the process to be denoted to as the black box of transformational leadership (Avolio *et al.*, 2009). Ever since, and particularly during the last decade, there has been a vast amount of studies investigating mediators of transformational leadership (Tafvelin, 2013).

Previous research considered transformational leadership as an antecedent of job satisfaction (Abdelhafiz *et.al* 2016; Ali *et.al*, 2013, Voon *et.al* 2011). However, the mechanism on how transformational leadership influence job satisfaction has not been explored thoroughly (Yıldız, & Şimşek, 2016). This study argues the relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction is mediated by employee voice. Depending on the behaviour of their leaders, employees decide to make recommendations on work-related issues, and their decision on making improvement-oriented suggestions and recommendations serves as the foundation for their further extra-role behaviour (Dedahanov *et al.*, 2016). Leaders as contextual factors of organizations play a key role in having followers voice their thoughts and in motivating them that way (Li & Sun, 2015). Transformational leaders encourage communication channels with their employees, which make it easy for employees to express their opinions and suggestions (Hu *et al.*, 2015). Moreover, they pay attention

to the opinions and feedback of employees and values different views and opinions (Men, 2014). Therefore, when employees perceive that their leaders provide encouragement and motivation in daily encounters, employees are more likely to speak up.

Additionally, employee voice generates feelings of harmony and self-concordance when there is an observed alignment between individual values and those expressed in the workplace (Bono & Judge 2003). When employees voice their opinions and concerns, they are likely to experience positive feelings from genuinely speaking out and acting in harmony with their beliefs and values (Avey *et al.*, 2012). Moreover, employees who observe that they can speak up and provide ideas, solution, and recommendations to their leaders and colleagues, they tend to be satisfied with their job more than employees who do not express and deliver their thoughts and opinions (Sinha & Shukla, 2012). Hence, based on the discussion above and support of the previous empirical evidence of the relationships between the constructs of the study (Section 2.5), it appears rational to assume that employee voice can mediate the relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction. Therefore, to further elaborate how transformational leadership influence job satisfaction, this study raises a question on the role of employee voice as a mediator on the relationship between transformational leadership practices and job satisfaction at Royal Jordanian Airlines.

1.4 Research Questions

Based on the research problem the following research questions were developed:

1. What is the relationship between transformational leadership practices (Idealized influence, Intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, inspirational motivation) and job satisfaction at Royal Jordanian Airlines?

2. What is the relationship between (Idealized influence, Intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, inspirational motivation) and employee voice at Royal Jordanian Airlines?
3. What is the relationship between employee voice and job satisfaction at Royal Jordanian Airlines?
4. Does employee voice mediate the relationship between (Idealized influence, Intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, inspirational motivation) and satisfaction at Royal Jordanian Airlines?

1.5 Research Objectives

This research aims to determine the role of transformational leadership style in encouraging employee voice and improving job satisfaction. Also, to examine the mediation role of employee voice in the relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction. More specifically, this study tries to address the following objectives:

1. To determine the relationship between transformational leadership practices (Idealized influence, Intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, inspirational motivation) and job satisfaction Royal Jordanian Airlines.
2. To determine the relationship between transformational leadership practices (Idealized influence, Intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, inspirational motivation) and employee voice at Royal Jordanian Airlines.
3. To determine the relationship between employee voice and job satisfaction at Royal Jordanian Airlines.
4. To determine whether employee voice mediates the relationship between transformational leadership practices (Idealized influence, Intellectual

stimulation, individualized consideration, inspirational motivation) and job satisfaction at Royal Jordanian Airlines.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to determine the importance of practicing transformational leadership and to what extent this style of leadership can influence job satisfaction while taking into consideration the mediating role of employee's voice behaviour. This study was conducted at Royal Jordanian Airlines, an organization that provides international services and is the number one flag carrier airline in Jordan. A cross-sectional design using a questionnaire applied to answer the research questions of the study, and the sample of the study was 346 non-managerial employees. In line with Royal Jordanian Airlines organizational structure (*See Figure 3.2*), the non-managerial employee's responsibilities are related to field work through customer services, clerical, technical and functional duties in their area of specialities. Despite the fact that some of the non-managerial employees execute supervision duties, they are not considered at the management level, and they are paid for their functional and technical expertise and not for their supervising duties. Given that, the population of the study is non-managerial employees within the groups of (Supervisors, Professionals, Staff, Technicians, Workers, Cabin crew). The sample is going to evaluate their managers' practices of transformational leadership, their expression of voice and their feeling of job satisfaction at Royal Jordanian airlines.

1.7 Significance of the Study

The current study makes several significant contributions to the literature empirically, theoretically and practically. First of all, this study contributes to the existing literature of job satisfaction on the role of transformational leadership and voice behaviour as antecedents of job satisfaction within Jordanian airline industry. This study further elaborates on the existing research on job satisfaction about its

relationship with transformational leadership and employee voice. The insights gained from the findings will hopefully help organizations to reconsider their current efforts in improving job satisfaction among its employees. Accordingly, this tends to improve and enhance employees' effectiveness and work excellence. In a nutshell, this study has a significant contribution to the studies of job satisfaction, transformational leadership and employee voice. Moreover, considering the context where the study is conducted, may provide newer insight of Jordanian's workforce, particularly its airline employees.

Secondly, the results of the study provide further empirical evidence on the relationships between transformational leadership (idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation and individualized consideration), employee voice and job satisfaction. Despite that transformational leadership, employee voice and job satisfaction have been studied separately in previous studies (e.g. Men, 2014; Ali *et al.*, 2013; Holland *et al.*, 2011). The current study strength is in the investigation of an integrated model that consists of transformational leadership as the predictor, employee voice as a mediator, and job satisfaction as an outcome. Leadership behaviours and practices promote employee voice, which serves as the initial step towards job satisfaction since to engage in voice on job-related matters generate a perception for employees that their opinions and suggestions are heard and appreciated by the organization management, which in turn leads to job satisfaction. Hence, the motivation behind proposing the mediating process of employee voice in the relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction allows this study to provide a deeper understanding of leadership style and practices that improve job satisfaction via employee voice.

Thirdly, this study contributes to the literature by the application of Self-determination theory (SDT) in explaining the relationship between employee voice and job satisfaction. SDT is a theory of human motivation that is concerned with people's inherent growth tendencies and innate psychological needs. It focuses on the degree to which an individual's behaviour is self-motivated and self-determined (Ryan, & Deci, 2017; Deci, 1971). According to SDT, humans are inherently directed towards activities that satisfy psychological needs (Deci & Ryan, 2000). These activities, in turn, encourage optimal psychological growth and well-being in various aspects of life,

including work. It also points to that motivation influence our goal-oriented behaviour and determines individual satisfaction (Deci & Ryan, 2000, 1985). SDT debates that intrinsic motivations influence goal-oriented behaviour and determine own satisfaction. SDT is applicable as the theory to support the relationship between employee voice and job satisfaction. Hence, this study perceives employee voice as goal-oriented behaviour where expressing voice provides satisfaction of the basic psychological need such as autonomy, which is about having the choice to express ideas and opinions about work-related issues.

Also, this present study contributes theoretically by examining the relationship between transformational leadership and its practices and job satisfaction through the support of Herzberg motivation theory. Herzberg *et al.* (1959) categorized the determinant of job satisfaction into two categories namely: intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors. The motivational factors (*intrinsic*) are related to the “*quality of working life*,” Whereas, (*extrinsic*) hygiene factors function as an important platform to the intrinsic factors (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014). Therefore, the current study proposes that transformational leadership, which is beyond the element of supervision in Herzberg theory, can be the platform that creates an environment where employees are motivated and encouraged about work-related processes and challenges, in turn, this kind of process leads to employee’s job satisfaction. Hence, this study argues that transformational leadership can be regarded as an extrinsic motivational factor within Herzberg theory.

Fourthly, the Arab region compared to the western world has a quite small body of research and literature, which has highlighted the effects of practicing leadership styles on many of areas in organizations (Nusair *et al.*, 2012). The fact that a growing number of theorists have recently begun to question the general possibility of applying all of the principles of transformational leadership in some regions of the developing world or non-western countries. Many theorists have maintained that the imposition of leadership and management models, including those stemming from the transformational leadership paradigm, may yield negligible outcomes owing to fundamental differences in national cultural values that distinguish the societies of Western culture from those of non-western or developing countries (Litz, 2014). Therefore, it is crucial to evaluate whether a successful conceptual model of

transformational leadership is appropriate for the specific culture and norms of Jordan or leadership concepts should be adopted, which may allow it to be more successful in this particular context. This study contributes in expanding knowledge within Arab literature, which have a similarity in the culture by introducing a unique integrated model of leadership style (transformational leadership, employee behaviours such as employee voice and attitude such as job satisfaction).

Finally, Jordan's accomplishments in the field of human resource development and management throughout earlier years have been noteworthy, especially when it achieved a significant decrease in illiteracy through the reform of the education system (Nusair *et al.*, 2012). Moreover, a collaboration with international organizations through human resource development conferences had helped improve and develop the Jordanian labour market. Therefore, Jordan is considered a remarkable example of administrative and managerial leadership which can produce substantial findings. This study intends to offer insight for Royal Jordanian Airline managers along with other organizations through providing insight on the leader's practices which can embolden and promote the constructive expression of voice among employees. Moreover, to take into consideration investing in transformational leadership training to reinforce and support the leadership behaviours to contribute to the growth of a robust and vigorous environment, which reflects the employee's satisfaction levels.

1.8 Conceptual and Operational Definitions

1.8.1 Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership refers to a leader who is involved and engaged with employees, where he/she attempts to support a significant change of individuals, stimulates them to achieve and perform beyond their transactional agreements and expectations (Panagopoulous & Dimitriadis, 2009; Bass, 1985). A transformative leader provides a vision and a sense of organizational mission; instils pride, appreciation, and respect between followers (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Transformational

leaders stimulate the follower's creativity through encouragement and motivation. They encourage their followers and motivate them to seek new methods to solve problems and appreciate the different needs of each employee and their potential (Bass & Avolio, 1994). Throughout the study, transformational leadership definition was adopted based on four distinctive practices namely: idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, individual consideration and inspirational motivation (Bass, 1985).

Idealized influence refers to a leader who provides followers with a clear sense of purpose which is motivating; a role model and example for ethical behaviour which shapes identification with the leader's expressed vision. Intellectual stimulation clarifies leader's anticipation in boosting creative thinking among employees when approaching challenges and problems. Individual consideration is the ability to identify the differences between employees for the sake of the organization's advantage. Finally, the last dimension is inspirational motivation, which describes a leader's capability to energize employees by becoming more engaged and leading task-oriented commitment through sharing one's vision and appealing to employees on an emotional level. Transformational leadership is measured through short-form MLQ by (Bass & Avolio, 1995).

1.8.2 Employee Voice

Employee voice is a "discretionary communication of ideas, suggestions, concerns, or opinions about work-related issues with the intent to improve the organization or unit functioning" (Morrison, 2011, p. 375). Voice as a behaviour emphasizes on the expression of constructive challenge intended to improve rather than merely criticize (Van Dyne & LePine 1998). Employee voice is an expression of ideas and information for the development of the organization; it is argued to be constructive to organizations, nevertheless, the voice is not always welcomed. It is not always accepted for the reason that the ideas may challenge the status quo and the power holder of the organization (Detert & Burris 2007). Employee voice can be both constructive and challenging. It is constructive for the reason that it is anticipated to increase organizational productivity and efficiency. On the other hand, it is challenging

due to that it targets change by adjusting, modifying and improving current practices (Van Dyne *et al.*, 1995). Throughout the study, employee voice has been defined as the expression of ideas, opinions, and information of an employee to managers and other colleagues with the purpose of improving the organizational effectiveness and functioning (Van Dyne & LePine, 1998).

1.8.3 Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is designated as a positive feeling regarding a job, which results from an assessment of its characteristics. Employees with a high level of job satisfaction hold positive feelings about their job. However, unsatisfied employees hold negative feelings. Job satisfaction is a pleasant, positive feeling that results from one's job and experience (Locke, 1976). Employees tend to view their work with unfavourable and favourable sentiments. It is the degree of contentment and pleasure that are connected with one's work. If employees strongly like their job they are expected to experience a higher job satisfaction, whereas employees who do not like their job will feel dissatisfied (Ashwathapa, 2008). Favorable and positive perceptions concerning the job are a sign of job satisfaction. On the other hand, unfavourable and negative perceptions concerning the job are a sign of job dissatisfaction (Armstrong, 2012). Throughout this study, job satisfaction referred to as the extent to which employees like or dislike their jobs and their feelings regarding different aspects of work (Spector, 1997).

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